

RADIO ACTIVE!

Robin switches on to a box office success



that, he goes into some of the character voices of the famed schizophrenic movie character portrayed by Sally Field.

Robin is not unlike a Sybil character. In an interview, his scattered answers to questions, punctuated by a steady stream of character voices, tend to go off on tangents. Many of his hilarious antics are reminiscent of his TV character Mork from the old hit series *Mork And Mindy* and it's difficult not to start suspecting such hyperactivity isn't the result of drinking or drugs.

"I tried once or twice to drink and do stand-up comedy. I tried performing on cocaine and it was

SHIRLEY MacLAINE, eat your heart out! Good Morning Vietnam star Robin Williams claims he's got "channelling" down to an art.

"I guess I'm getting a little Shirley MacLaine-ish," Robin tells TV WEEK with a sheepish grin.

But, as he explains, it was this use of "channelling" in his outrageous monologues as Vietnam DJ Adrian Cronauer in *Good Morning Vietnam* that is credited with much of the film's box-office success.

"I just allowed myself to stay open. I was just a channel," he says. "When you get into a certain character, it just flows. I don't

know what I'm saying or why, but it comes out and it's funny. You feel like saying 'Whoa, strap yourself in!'"

Robin is riding the crest of a professional wave following the huge box-office success of *Good Morning Vietnam* in America and Australia.

"I'm pretty excited to finally have a commercial success and see people in Los Angeles lining up around the block to get in," he says.

"I think I've made some quite interesting films, but none of them has really made money, so I guess I'm not considered a commercial success.

"This was the first combination of the two things that have tended to remain separate — the stand-up comedy and the acting.

"It was kind of like Sybil." With

Now it's good





ridiculous. It was like being a haemophiliac in a razorblade factory!" Robin says.

"If you do drugs, the problem is that you have to keep the stand-up going without going down with the drug.

"Once I realised that performing was a drug, I didn't need all the rest."

Robin also freely admits that he underwent therapy because of his "confused" personality.

"At first even the psychiatrist said, 'I'm worried that if I make you better, you won't be funny'," Robin says.

"After a bit of work with him I realised there are two kinds of energy — fission and fusion. You can gain a greater energy from putting things together then eventually you can start talking about drugs and painful memories and use them in your act so that it's almost cathartic."

As Vietnam DJ Adrian Cronauer in *Good Morning Vietnam*, Robin admits "it's only five per cent character and 95 per cent me".

Although the story is loosely based on the real life of Cronauer, Robin refused to meet him before working on the film so that he could concentrate on developing his own version of wackiness.

In a complete change of style, Robin's next project will be a Los Angeles theatre production of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting For Godot*.

The three-month run set for later this year, will also star Steve Martin as Vladimir to Williams' Estragen.

"Steve and I have done a reading and we're excited about this, even though it is a strange piece," Robin says.

*From Jenny Cooney
in Los Angeles*

morning Marsha, goodbye marriage

ROBIN WILLIAMS, who has separated from his wife, Valerie, showed up at the glitzy New York premiere of *Good Morning Vietnam* arm in arm with Marsha Garces (left), his personal assistant during the movie shoot in Bangkok, Thailand.

The two later attended a party at the trendy 21 Club.

"Marsha is a very dear friend who makes me very happy," Robin says.

A source who worked on the movie says: "They became close during shooting. She was his personal assistant, his *Girl Friday*."

"She is an attractive personable woman who likes to laugh, but knows when to be serious."

"She is also very efficient and seems to be a stabilising influence on him."

The star-studded party was the first time Robin has been photographed with Marsha, although they have been seen together in Los Angeles.

"Robin takes her to all the best boutiques on Rodeo Drive," a Beverly Hills source says. "He buys her outfits costing thousands of dollars. He is very generous."

Robin and estranged wife Valerie are still friendly. He supports her and their son, Zachary, 4.

But friends say there is no chance of either an imminent reconciliation or any plans for divorce.

RIGHT: Robin Williams with his wife Valerie and son Zachary.

